

UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Pribilof Evacuation Camp,  
 (St. Paul) Funter, Alaska,  
 August 5, 1942.

Superintendent,  
 Fish and Wildlife Service,  
 706 Federal Office Bldg.,  
 Seattle, Washington.

Following is an outline of the activities at  
 Funter since the arrival of the natives June 24.

The Penguin arrived the morning of June 25 with a small amount of cargo, mostly perishables from Seattle. Mr. Johnston and the writer arrived with the Penguin. The natives of both villages were all housed in the cannery buildings in a very crowded condition. Freight was unloaded from the Penguin and a scow borrowed from the P. E. Harris Company which moved the St. George people and their belongings directly across the bay to the Admiralty Alaska Gold Mine site. The Penguin left shortly thereafter for Seattle to return with much-needed supplies and food-stuff.

Mr. Johnston made a hurried inspection of the cannery site, but understand was not ashore at the mine site. He returned to Seattle aboard the Penguin.

Most of the buildings at the cannery have been unused for 12 years or more and are all dry-rotted, including the roofs. At first glance they seemed in fair condition, but the houses like the walks outside, with a little use, fall all to pieces.

Within a few days the station was almost a complete wreck. The walks were broken down, people were falling through the floors, and we were very fortunate that there were no broken limbs.



#2 -

With practically no tools, no nails whatsoever, and only salvaged lumber, it was surely a problem trying to repair the outside walks and make some of the houses liveable, as nearly every building sheds very little water during a rain.

By using second-hand nails and lumber we were able to repair most of the worst spots outside, and it wasn't for about 10 days after our arrival that Mr. Olson in Juneau obtained tools and a few nails from the CCC supplies which helped considerably.

The cannery people helped all they could, giving us permission to tear down two old buildings so that we might have lumber, material, etc., to at least make the place partly safe for the people living here.

The condition of the ground around the buildings is such that no traffic whatsoever can be carried on unless there is a board walk or passage-way for the hand-trucks, etc., in hauling supplies and coal to the various destinations where the people live.

All the cooking for the entire village was accomplished on two old stoves, and it was a miracle how the natives could get the meals for some 290 people on such small cooking space. It was only the arrival of a good stove on the Penguin that changed this situation, and also remedied the baking problem; on the original stoves, two men had to work 14 hours at night in order to bake around 20 loaves, whereas the normal minimum requirements for the entire village should be about 60 loaves.

The supplies were very low, and as we were not able to figure definitely on the arrival of further supplies, it was necessary to reduce the meals to practically one meal per day.

All the men have been compelled to work a certain number of hours every day making repairs, keeping up the station, cooks, garbage detail, wood cutters, etc. With the scanty rations, there was much discontent, but things looked a little better after the arrival of the Penguin with more supplies and a decent stove.

#3 -

Messrs. Olson and Hynes have been very helpful in doing all in their power for us at Funter Bay. Much credit for what we have accomplished in the solving of our problems goes to these two men as I feel it would have been absolutely impossible to have kept this place going if it had not have been for their help.

The Territorial Department of Health officers visited the camps at Funter and declared them both very much unsanitary, stating every effort should be made to improve conditions immediately, as the possibility of contamination is very great as we have no garbage and sewage disposal other than the beach. 90% of the entire native village is using a dilapidated toilet which stands on the beach at a precarious angle just above the low-water mark, and is of course very unsanitary, especially in warm weather.

The water supply is gravity-fed from a creek farther up in the hills and in the past has been used only in the summer. Pipes around the cannery are laid helter-skelter on top of the ground, patched with rubber hose, and will soon have to be discontinued on account of cold weather.

This entire village will then have to depend on rain-water or it will have to be hauled by boat or carried approximately 3/4 of a mile.

Should the Bureau be able to secure material, I believe the water situation can be somewhat remedied for the winter, but this must be done soon as people cannot live without water.

All the water for washing clothing is now heated on the cook stove or an open fireplace and is far from satisfactory. The only place for the women to wash is outside on the ground or on the sidewalks, and it is very hard under these conditions to keep the place clean and sanitary.

#4

The water situation at the mine site where the St. George village is located is only a summer-time system, but there are several creeks flowing between the buildings. When the water is shut off from the present system, it will not be as difficult there for water, altho the sanitary condition of the water would not be of the best as in many instances the children play along these streams, etc.

The Territorial Health Department has been notified of the possibilities for water at the cannery but to date they have not approved of either of the two plans submitted to them.

The toilet facilities are the worst at present, and even though the Health Department would allow outdoor privies, we do not as yet have the material for building them, and this office has, as yet, failed to find any system that will keep a place sanitary which is occupied by this many people who have only one broken down, dilapidated toilet to use. These people have been here six weeks, and we do not even have word that any supplies or provisions are being made to change this situation.

The Territorial Health Department has worked very hard in immunizing the people of both villages and state that their efforts will all be in vain unless living conditions are greatly improved.

Many of the people are sleeping so many in a room that they have to sleep in relay as there is not sufficient room for them to all lay down at the same time in their cramped stuffy quarters....No bunks, no mattresses, and very little bedding has arrived since the arrival of the natives. They were compelled to leave nearly everything at the Islands at the time of evacuation. The outlook for the people of this Bay is very dark. None of the buildings occupied by natives or whites are built for winter use, and as September comes, also comes cold weather; there can be only one result if the natives are expected to use these same quarters during the winter; there will be many deaths if we have even at least normal weather.

#5 -

If the Penguin which is expected in the next few days does not have at least part of the supplies to begin preparation for winter, these two stations will be in dire circumstances by the time cold weather really sets in. The condition of the quarters for the employees is similar to that of the natives; there isn't a building at the mine or cannery site which is fixed with toilet facilities or is dry, which can be used.

Everything in our power is being done with material on hand to improve conditions and to anticipate arrival of the severe winter weather; altho for instance, roofing paper arrived on the last Penguin but no nails were received for its installation, and very little or nothing can be accomplished until further supplies arrive

Anyone used to the natives can easily see why there is so much grumbling and discontent now since the novelty of the whole thing has worn off, altho, todate we have had only one man from either side who refused to work, and after missing three meals he quickly changed his mind. Other than that, there has been no serious trouble encountered. But that is not guaranteeing future difficulties.

In closing, I would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Necessary material for toilets, washing and bathing facilities, etc., be obtained thru military channels or otherwise, and immediately shipped to Funter Bay.
2. Sufficient bunks and mattresses be secured immediately.
3. That some official of the Bureau from Washington be delegated to inspect this place so they may have first-hand information of actual existing conditions
4. The most important recommendation: That the Bureau find some way of paying the natives of these two villages a maximum amount of \$20 a month so they may purchase necessary clothing, tobacco, etc., which is not being furnished by the Service.

Yours very truly,

lcm;js

Agent & Caretaker